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TAGS: EG, IS, PINR

SUBJECT: INTSUM 262 - FEBRUARY 28, 1977

NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS

1. LEBANON. HEAVY FIGHTING ERUPTED IN THE AREA OF BINT JUBAYL ALONG THE SOUTHERN BORDER OVER THE WEEKEND AS THE CHRISTIANS ATTEMPTED TO ADVANCE ON THE PALESTINIAN-HELD TOWN. THE CHRISTIAN SHELLING AND OFFENSIVE--UNDOUBTEDLY ACCOMPANIED BY ISRAELI ARTILLERY--ARE APPARENTLY DESIGNED TO FORCE A PALESTINIAN WITHDRAWAL BECAUSE THE CHRISTIANS PROBABLY DO NOT HAVE THE FORCES TO PUSH THE PALESTINIANS OUT ON THEIR OWN.

2. SARKISIS REPORTEDLY CONSIDERING ASKING FOR UN TROOPS TO POLICE SOUTHERN LEBANON AND END THE CHRISTIAN-PALESTINIAN FIGHTING THERE. HE IS SAID TO BELIEVE THIS WOULD HEAD OFF THE POSSIBILITY OF ISRAELI INTERVENTION. ON A RELATED DEVELOPMENT, CAIRO MENA REPORTED THAT SOME
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UNSPECIFIED ARAB STATES HAVE SUGGESTED TO SARKIS THAT HE FORM A "LEBANESE NATIONAL GUARD" DIVISION AS A TEMPORARY SECURITY MEASURE UNTIL THE LEBANESE ARMY IS REBUILT. PART OF THIS UNIT WOULD THEN BE STATIONED IN SOUTH LEBANON.

3. ACCORDING TO NEWS SOURCES, LEBANESE GOVERNMENT SOURCES

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SAID SATURDAY THAT THE PALESTINIANS HAVE AGREED TO PULL BACK FROM THE SOUTHERN BORDER REGION. IN RETURN, THE SYRIANS AGREED NOT TO ENTER THE PALESTINIAN CAMPS IN BEIRUT. THE COMPROMISE WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN WORKED OUT BETWEEN ARAFAT AND ASAD IN A MEETING LAST WEDNESDAY. (UNCLASSIFIED)

4. EGYPT. SADAT SAID YESTERDAY ON ABC'S "ISSUES AND ANSWERS" THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS AGREED TO DELIVER 50 MIG 21S TO EGYPT IN RESPONSE TO A LONG-STANDING REQUEST. SADAT NOTED THAT THE PLANES WERE PART OF A TOTAL OF MORE THAN 150 AIRCRAFT EGYPT HAD ASKED FOR TO COMPLETE AN OVERHAUL OF ITS AIRCRAFT. HE OBSERVED THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN EXPECTING ANY DELIVERIES, IMPLYING THAT THE SOVIET DECISION WAS A SURPRISE.

5. SADAT AND ASAD ARRIVED IN KHARTOUM YESTERDAY FOR TWO DAYS OF DISCUSSIONS WITH SUDANESE PRESIDENT NIMEIRI. SADAT CLAIMED THAT THE SUMMIT WOULD RESULT IN "HISTORICAL DECISIONS." WE BELIEVE THIS MAY INDICATE THAT THE SUDANESE MAY JOIN THE EGYPT-SYRIAN UNIFIED COMMAND.

6. EMBASSY CAIRO OBSERVES THAT EGYPTIAN CRITICISM OF THE LACK OF GE;FROSITY OF THE OIL-PRODUCING STATES IS INCREASING IN THE CAIRO PRESS AS IT IS IN SYRIA. IT IS POSSIBLE, THE EMBASSY COMMENTS, THAT EGYPT AND SYRIA, AND POSSIBLY JORDAN AS WELL, HAVE DECIDED TO COORDINATE THEIR CRITICISM OF THE RICH ARABS. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

7. ISRAEL. THE RULING LABOR PARTY HAS ADOPTED AN ELECTION

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PLATFORM MAKING SPECIFIC A BELIEF HELD BY MANY WITHIN THE PARTY THAT PARTS OF THE WEST BANK COULD BE RETURNED TO JORDAN IN EXCHANGE FOR A PEACE SETTLEMENT, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS FROM TEL AVIV. THE PLANK WAS ADOPTED AFTER AN EMOTIONAL DEBATE BETWEEN PARTY HAWKS LED BY FORMER DEFENSE MINISTER DAYAN AND MODERATES LED BY PRIME MINISTER RABIN. DAYAN, WHO ARGUED THAT THE ACTION WAS PREMATURE; WAS SAID TO BE CONSIDERING LEAVING THE PARTY FOLLOWING THE DEFEAT OF HIS POSITION BY A NARROW MARGIN.

8. BY BEING MORE EXPLICIT ON THIS MATTER THAN PREVIOUSLY. LABOR HAS ASSURED THE CONTINUED SUPPORT OF MAPAM, ITS LEFT-WING COALITION PARTNER. MAPAM HAD MADE ITS COOPERATION CONTINGENT ON THE SELECTION OF RABIN AS LABOR CANDIDATE FOR PRIME MINISTER, AND ON A FORTHRIGHT STATEMENT OF LABOR'S WILLINGNESS TO MAKE CONCESSIONS ON THE WEST BANK ISSUE. BOTH DEMANDS HAVE NOW BEEN MET.

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9. DAYAN'S DEFECTION WOULD CLEARLY HURT LABOR'S CHANCES IN THE ELECTION IN MAY. IT IS FAR FROM CERTAIN, HOWEVER, THAT HE WILL DECIDE TO LEAVE THE PARTY. MUCH WILL DEPEND ON THE ATTITUDE OF DEFENSE MINISTER PERES, WHO IS A POLITICAL ALLY OF DAYAN'S AND WHO APPEALS TO THE SAME HAWKISH FACTION AS DAYAN. PERES PLEDGED TO WORK FOR PARTY UNITY AFTER LOSING HIS BID TO REPLACE RABIN LAST WEEK.

10. A GROUP OF 30 ISRAELIS OF THE ULTRA-NATIONALIST GUSH EMUNIM MOVEMENT ATTEMPTED TO ESTABLISH AN UNAUTHORIZED SETTLEMENT IN THE WESTBANKEARLY YESTERDAY. THEY SET UP CAMP NEAR THE VILLAGE OF MESHA, ON STRATEGIC HILLS NORTHEAST OF TEL AVIV. ACCORDING TO JERUSALEM RADIO, THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY DECIDED TO FOUND A NEW SETTLEMENT NEAR THIS VILLAGE BUT HAS NOT GRANTED PERMISSION TO START. THE SETTLERS WERE EVICTED BY TROOPS.

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11. PARAGUAY HAS PROBABLY CANCELLED AN AGREEMENT TO BUY SIX ARAVA TWIN-TURBOPROP LIGHT TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT FROM ISRAELI AIRCRAFT INDUSTRIES (IAI), ACCORDING TO THE U.S. AIR ATTACHE IN TEL AVIV. A RECENT ASUNCION PRESS REPORT ALSO STATED THAT THE DEAL HAD BEEN CA'CELLED BECAUSE OF A LACK OF ADEQUATE FUNDS. THE IAI MANAGER STATED THAT THE U.K. HAD PERSUADED PARAGUAY TO BUY ITS ISLANDER LIGHT TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT. ALTHOUGH THE ARAVA HAS BEEN A BIG SELLER--OVER 40 HAVE BEEN DELIVERED TO LATIN AMERICA--THE LOSS OF THE PARAGUAY SALE, COUPLED WITH THE LOSS OF THE KFIR SALE TO ECUADOR, REPRESENTS A SET-BACK TO ISRAEL'S OVERALL EXPORT PROGRAM. (CONFIDENTIAL/ NOFORN)

12. PALESTINIANS. JORDANIAN PRIME MINISTER BADRAN TOLD AMBASSADOR PICKERING THAT HIS SEVEN AND ONE-HALF HOURS OF MEETINGS WITH A PLO DELEGATION LAST WEEK WERE NOT UNPLEASANT. BADRAN EXPRESSED THE BELIEF THAT THE PLO WOULD ACCEPT A GENEVA INVITATION IF IT WERE NOT SPECIFICALLY TIED TO THE PALESTINIAN "REFUGEE" ASPECT OF SC 242. FAHUM, LEADER OF THE PLO DELEGATION, MAINTAINED THAT PLO ACCEPTANCE OF A WEST BANK/GAZA STATE AND THEIR WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE MEANS THE PALESTINE NATIONAL CONVENANT IS ALREADY AMENDED DE FACTO TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST.

13. IN A LENGTHY INTERVIEW WITH AL-AHRAM PLO POLITICAL DEPARTMENT CHIEF QADDUMI SAID THAT THE PLO HAS GIVEN WALDHEIM A SERIESOF POINTS CONCERNING PLO PARTICIPATION AT GENEVA. ACCORDING TO QADDUMI, THE PLO MUST:

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--RECEIVE AN INVITATION;

--PARTICIPATE AS AN INDEPENDENT DELEGATION FROM THE BEGINNING;

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--BE INCLUDED IN ALL MIDDLE EAST PEACE CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES WITHOUT EXCEPTION;

--BE CERTAIN THAT THE PALESTINIAN ITEM IS ON THE AGENDA; AND

--BE ASSURED THAT THE GREAT POWERS WILL GIVE GUARANTEES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE ON LAND FROM WHICH ISRAEL WITHDRAWS.

14. EMBASSY CAIRO OBSERVES THAT COVERAGE OF QADDUMI'S INTERVIEW BY THE EGYPTIAN NEWS AGENCY MENA MAKES HIM SOUND MORECONCILIATORYTHAN HE ACTUALLY WAS BY OMITTING MORE CONTROVERSIAL REFERENCES. EVEN THE SELECTIVE SUMMARY, HOWEVER, MAKES IT CLEAR THAT QADDUMI IS SETTING FORTH THE HARD-LINE PLO POSITION. (SECRET)
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